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HOUSE RESOLUTION 375
By Odom

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Lieutenant Charles Rollins Ware, United States Navy and the gallantry of the crew of the *USS Charles R. Ware* (DD-865).

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal safety and concerns to ensure our individual and collective freedom, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, Lieutenant Charles Rollins Ware, was one of countless Tennesseans who have served with courage and honor in the United States Navy; on June 8, 2002, he is being posthumously honored in Athens by the citizens of his hometown and the heroic crewmembers of the *USS Charles R. Ware* (DD-865); and

WHEREAS, on June 8, a 3-foot by 5-foot aluminum plaque will be dedicated to honor Lt. Ware and his patriotic service to his country; it will bear the inscription, "To honor the memory of Lieutenant Charles Rollins Ware, the former officers and crewmen of the destroyer *USS Charles R. Ware* (DD-865) dedicate this plaque in salute to a fallen hero and one of the U.S. Navy's

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finest officers. During the Battle of Midway, in June 1942, Lt. Ware selflessly sacrificed his life to help defeat a formidable Japanese fleet"; and

WHEREAS, this Ware Memorial will be the focal point of a park honoring all veterans; it will forever be a place for citizens of this great nation to enjoy their freedoms and to reflect upon the sacrifices of the heroes who have fought and sacrificed to preserve and defend them; and

WHEREAS, for his gallantry in battle, Lt. Ware was awarded the Navy Cross, with this citation: "For extraordinary heroism and courageous devotion to duty while piloting an airplane of a Scouting Squadron in action against enemy Japanese forces in the Battle of Midway during the period of June 4-6, 1942. Participating in a devastating assault against a Japanese invasion fleet, Lieutenant Ware, with fortitude and resolute devotion to duty, pressed home his attacks in the face of a formidable barrage of anti-aircraft fire and fierce fighter opposition. His gallant perseverance and disregard for his own personal safety were important contributing factors to the success achieved by our forces and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service"; and

WHEREAS, born March 11, 1911 in Knoxville, Tennessee, Lt. Ware joined the Navy in 1929 from Athens, Tennessee, where his mother was living at the time at 328 Ohio St; in 1934, he graduated from the famed United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, he served at sea on various ships until 1940, when he entered flight training; upon earning his wings as a naval aviator, Lt. Ware was first assigned aboard the aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise (CV-6); and

WHEREAS, in January 1941, he was transferred to Scouting Squadron 5, aboard the carrier USS *Yorktown* (CV-5), and, in early 1942, Lt. Ware was reassigned to Scouting Squadron 6 aboard the USS *Enterprise*; it was from her deck that he flew into naval history when the Battle of Midway erupted on June 4, 1942; and

WHEREAS, Lt. Ware and his section of six Douglas SBD-2/3 "Dauntless" dive bombers joined other planes from the USS *Enterprise* and the USS *Yorktown* in pressing home a fierce

attack on three Japanese carriers, while fighting a large number of Japanese “Zero” fighter planes that protected the enemy fleet; when a second wave of Japanese planes appeared from a fourth enemy carrier, Lt. Ware attacked them without hesitation, even though his section’s fuel and ammunition were running dangerously low; the possibility of the aviators returning to their carriers diminished with each passing second, but Lt. Ware continued the attack until the last moment; and

WHEREAS, only two members of Lieutenant Ware’s heroic group survived to be rescued from the sea by a destroyer; the others, including Lieutenant Ware and his valiant air-gunner, ARM 1/c William H. Stambaugh, USN, of Paintsville, Johnson County, Kentucky, vanished into the vastness of the Pacific Ocean; Mr. Stambaugh, like all airmen who fought at Midway, has been enshrined in the Combat Aircrew Roll of Honor, located at the Midway Exhibit at Patriots Point Museum, Charleston, South Carolina, and like Lieutenant Ware, will be forever remembered for his ultimate sacrifice for freedom and his country; and

WHEREAS, in Lt. Ware’s honor, the USS *Charles R. Ware*, a Gearing-class destroyer, was launched at Bethlehem Steel Shipyard, Staten Island, New York, April 12, 1945, by Arva Zena Ware, his mother, and was placed in commission July 2 of that year; and

WHEREAS, for the next 29 years, DD-865 served the U.S. Navy well around the world, including in the waters off Vietnam in 1967; her crew earned much honor for their patriotic and dedicated service; and

WHEREAS, the crew's brave service is a fitting tribute to the memory of Lt. Ware, and they also are most deserving of the deepest thanks of the people of this State and our Nation; and

WHEREAS, after serving for a time as a Naval Reserve training ship, the *Ware* was decommissioned November 30, 1974 in Galveston, Texas; on November 15, 1981, the ship was used as a target and was sunk in 3000 fathoms in the Atlantic Ocean, 400 miles northeast of Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, as the ship is enshrined within the depths of the vast waters she once so gloriously patrolled, so are the USS *Charles R. Ware*, her crew, and her namesake forever enshrined in honor in our nation's collective memory; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That we honor the memory of Lieutenant Charles Rollins Ware, United States Navy, salute the gallant service provided by Lt. Ware, ARM 1/c William H. Stambaugh, and the crew of the USS *Charles R. Ware* (DD-865) at the Battle of Midway, and join with the citizens of Athens in celebrating the dedication of the Ware Memorial.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.